

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 8-10 are pending in this application, of which claims 1-3 have been withdrawn from consideration and claim 8 has been amended. No new claims have been added.

Claims 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite.

Accordingly, claim 8 has been amended to correct the noted instances of indefiniteness, and the 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, rejection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner has maintained from the previous Office Action the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 8-10 as unpatentable over Watanabe in view of Thornton and Haraguchi et al.

The only new argument addressed by the Examiner is regarding the new claim limitation related to the radial depth of the notch, where the Examiner states:

It would have been obvious to make the radial depth of each notch a majority of a thickness of the wall of the shaft member to provide a secure drive connection by providing a sufficiently large radial surface for engagement by projections 16 and to minimize material use. Only a relatively thin portion between the notches and outer surface of the spool would be required to provide a smooth continuous surface for winding of the tape.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. In the devices of the cited references such a construction would undesirably weaken the outer wall, while such a characteristic is desired in the instant application to allow absorption of the compressing force added to the end of the shaft member, as discussed on pages 8-9 of Applicant's Appeal Brief filed December 20, 2001. None of the other references require such a construction or recognize such a benefit resulting from it.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 8-10, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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